TOWN & COUNTRY CHURCH

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No. 125
May, 1957

Rocklane Makes A Community Religious Census

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LONNIE H. HASS

• The city of Indianapolis, Indiana has a population of 425,000 and is continuing to grow at a rapid rate. This city exerts a strong urbanizing influence on all the towns, villages and open countryside for a radius of fifty miles or more. The number of residences and places of business are increasing along the highways; new homes are being erected in nearby towns; new communities are springing up in the open country, and the roads are crowded when commuters go to the city and return from their places of employment.

Clark Township, a part of Johnson County which adjoins Marion, the Metropolitan County for the city of Indianapolis, has had a rural economy and social environment through many generations. Now, however, one hears talk of new by-pass highways, housing developments and industrial expansion. Rocklane village is located in the center of the township, with its boundaries forming the general outline of the community.

The Rocklane Christian Church, located in the open country a short distance from the village, has begun to feel the pressure of a city reaching into its community. After serving an agricultural constituency exclusively for many generations, the congregation has begun to sense new opportunities and growing responsibilities. In recent years capable leadership, both lay and ministerial, has begun to develop an expanding program of service to the changing community.

A Community Religious Census, discussed at various times in program planning, was recently approved by the church board and implemented into its program. The census was to be a part of a Church Life Revival, a program for rural church development promoted by the National Department of Town and Country Church of the Disciples of Christ. The Reverend Arthur I. Thorp, minister of the church and graduate student at the School of Religion, Butler University, Indianapolis, had seen its value and impressed the leadership with its possibilities. The Director of the Town and Country Church Department for the Disciples of Christ in Indiana was called to direct the program.

Preparation

Preparation for the program extended over a year's time, with a schedule for the project being set up six months in advance. Correspondence, telephone calls, conferences with the pastors, and meetings with the committees followed as plans developed. Two neighboring churches were invited to share in the census.

The census information sheet used was one that had been prepared by the National Department of Town and Country Church of the Disciples of Christ. The last section of the blank is similar to the one used generally, and especially by the National Christian Teaching Mission. Above

(*Continued on Page* 2)

Rocklane Christian Church, Greenwood, Ind.

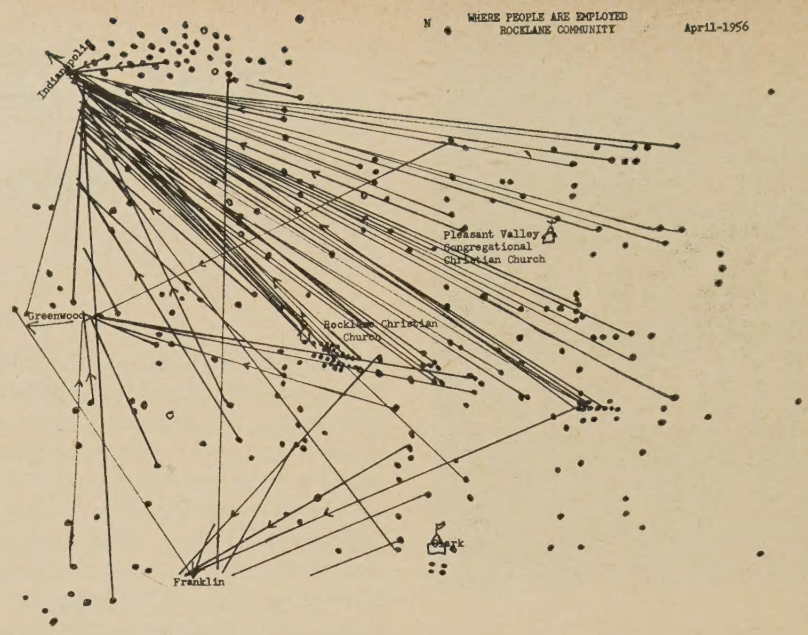
(*Continued from Page* 1)

this religious affiliation section had been entered such questions as occupation, length of residence, farm and home ownership, nationality, and race. These were designed to help the churches know and serve the people for whom they were responsible.

Taking the Census

Sunday afternoon was chosen for taking the census because visitors were more readily available and the people were more likely to be home to receive the visitors. Thirty people from the two cooperating churches met for lunch at the Rocklane Christian Church, following the morning church services. The director gave instructions on making the calls, filling out the information cards, and completing the reports. Assignments of territories were made by giving each team of two a small work map, with instructions to cover only the area of the map and to secure a report on every family in the area. These maps had been prepared by the committee previously and were taken from a larger map on which the community had been defined and mapped. The meeting closed with a moment of worship in which Divine blessing was sought.

During a two-hour period in the afternoon the thirty visitors completed 300 calls, covering 90% of the population. After finishing their assignments, the teams returned to the church where they made their reports. Later, they sat around drinking coffee and visiting, talking about the enriching experiences they had shared.

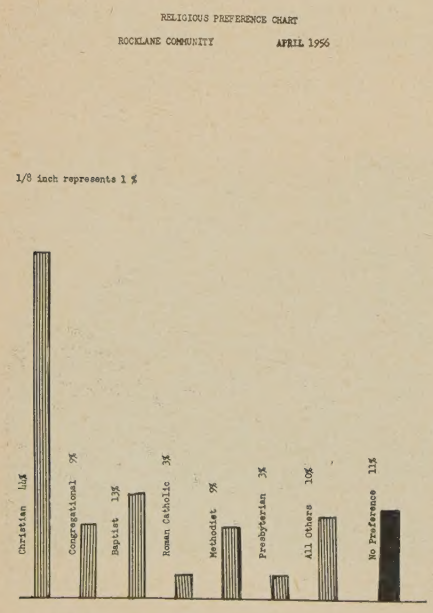


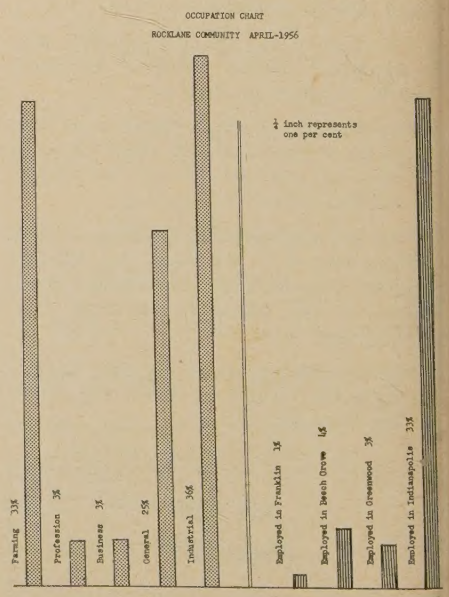
The Analysis

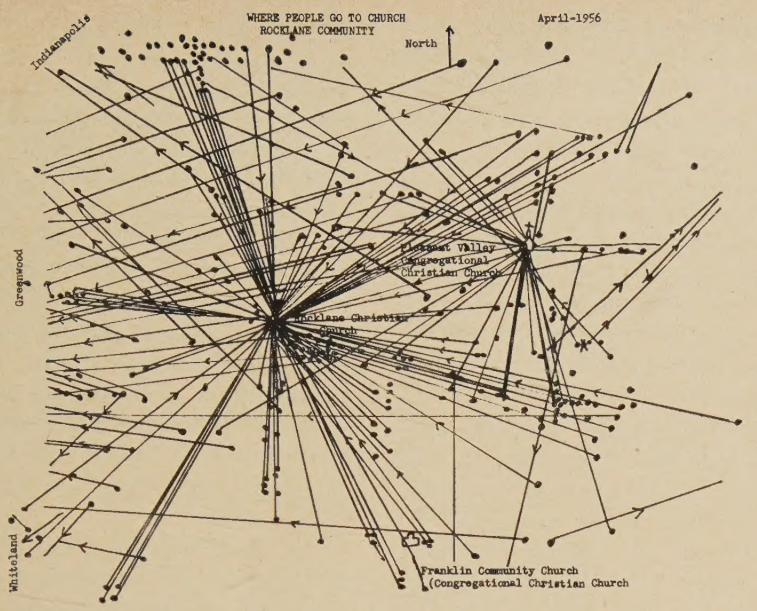
On Monday, call-backs were completed and a schedule of work was set up for analyzing the census materials. Under direction, local people did the analysis. The work was done mostly by the women of the parishes, since the men had to return to their employment. Work periods were scheduled from 10-12, 2-4, and 7-9 on Monday and Tuesday with the workers helping as their home responsibilities would permit. Forty-six people worked on the analysis at various times. With the time given by the thirty visitors, this totaled over 200 hours or twenty-five days of work.

The first step taken in the analysis of the census materials was to separate the non-church-related families and individuals. Workers who were experienced with the typewriter transferred the pertinent information about these people to 3″ x 5″ cards. After some instruction and understanding of the purpose of the information, they were able to do this work with a minimum of supervision. The cards were then filed for future evangelistic work and the census sheets were returned to the general file. Over 200 people were found to have no church connection in the community.

The tabulating of answers was the next procedure in the analysis. The workers were arranged, three at each end of the tables that had been set up in a large room; and were given tally sheets listing in columns certain categories. One of the three read the answer from the census sheet, another tallied, and the third made a symbol on the census sheet so it







would not be entered in this tally again. When one group had finished with the sheets, they were passed on to another group.

Charts and Graphs

As each tabulation was finished, one person was assigned the task of figuring the percentage of each column against the whole tally. These categories and the percentages were entered, in colors, on graphic charts, with headings, legends, and instructions for reading. Charts were made for occupation, length of residence, farm-house ownership, religious preference, and age groups.

As a further step in the census analysis, maps of the community were made showing where the people lived. Different colors were used for various churches, with white being used to indicate the residences of non-church related people. Lines were drawn from the residences of those attending to the church attended. Another map was made, showing the direction traveled, for people who were employed outside the community. These charts and maps were to be used later in study sessions with the church leadership, as they dealt with problems and opportunities current in the life of the church and community.

The concluding part of the census analysis was the dividing of the information sheets between the two cooperating churches, with membership cards of churches in neighboring communities being mailed to each of them. The ministers decided upon a division of the non-church related families, following preferences where indicated, so that each family or individual became the responsibility of some congregation. These eventually became a part of the church's evangelistic program.

The occupation study showed that 33 per cent of the families were engaged in farming, while 41 per cent were employed in industry outside the community, mainly in Indianapolis. There was little unemployment and few people living in retirement. The percentage engaged in the professions was about normal but the percentage engaged in local business was less than normal for a rural community.

A problem often encountered in fringe communities is conflict between the established rural culture and incoming urban influence. This did not seem to be an issue here.

Many community studies, such as this one, show a heavy loss of young people following high school graduation, leaving the rural community continually drained of potential leadership. This was not so pronounced in the Rocklane community. Many young people had remained at home, going to college or working in Indianapolis until marriage. The increase in population was coming from the following two sources: new people moving in and native young people establishing new homes and families.

The length-of-residence study showed a pattern of development similar to other rural communities until after World War II. The census revealed that 34 per cent became residents between 1945 and 1956; 6 per cent became residents in 1956. In other words, the most potential group for future development in the church program was that of the young adults.

The age-group study indicated a high percentage of children among the population of the community. Although under the strong urbanizing influence of a large city, with its tendency towards fewer children, Clark Township had maintained its rural characteristic of relatively large families. The church was a family church—avowedly and proudly so! Whole families came to church school and stayed through morning worship, often sitting together through the service. The church had a strong Christian Education program.

The Rocklane church seems to have anticipated some of the changes taking place. Over the period, 1930-1956, it has had a membership increase of 58 per cent, a church school increase of 84 per cent, and a budget increase of over 400 per cent. The present resident membership is 240; church school enrollment is 281; and the budget is $12,000. The Rocklane Church maintains an aggressive program in all areas of church life.

It's the way you show-up at the show-down that counts.

"A comedian has a good memory for old jokes and hopes others haven't."—Anon (Editors too.)

Moving?

Please send your new address to TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH.

The Rural New-Yorker

• Rural flavor vanished from New York, especially from Manhattan, long ago, but *The Rural New-Yorker,* farm journal, has stayed on. Even after 106 years' existence it still flourishes. It goes today to 300,000 subscribers from Maryland to Maine, from the seaboard to Western Pennsylvania. The journal got its start in Rochester, N. Y., but moved forty-one years ago to the abandoned Chelsea Methodist Church at 330 West 30th Street, New York. The old brick parsonage, one door east of the church, was included in the deal.

City slickers hurry by the plant but never seem to see the scaling black-and-white "Rural New-Yorker" sign over the main church door. They may hear the old Goss presses pant and wheeze, but the sound barely carries above traffic.

Step across the threshold, though, and you're in country-newspaper atmosphere—the pungent smell of printer's ink, splintery floors, unwashed walls and a folksy untidiness that carries you back into an earlier century.

Even in the old choir loft—or where the choir loft used to be—the editors' and business manager's offices are mid-nineteenth century. William A. O'Brien, a lean silverhead who is part-owner and has been with *The Rural New-Yorker* for fifty-two years, works at an old roll-top desk.

But that nineteenth century country-newspaper background in West Thirtieth Street is a calculated thing. *The Rural New-Yorker* owners know that it would be a grievous error to modernize the plant, to fancy up with heavy carpet, chromium and air conditioning. Their readers, who sometimes drop in to visit, would never understand.

Dirt farmers, the owners tell you, would look with suspicion on slicked-up editors in slicked-up surroundings.

Actually, the president and publisher, William F. Berghold, runs a 300-acre farm at Hillsdale in Columbia County and goes deep into *The Rural New-Yorker's* territory to get his material. Jim Bodurtha, the other staff writer, drives or flies into rural areas all the time for firsthand stuff. Jim came off a New England farm.

The journal's price is still 50 cents a year, three years for $1.

The editors still get from 500 to 600 letters a week from readers, mostly on farm problems. They still find an occasional dead aphid or beetle in a letter sent by a husbandman who hasn't been able to identify the pest. Damaged fruit comes, too, for analysis.

There's no thought of ever moving the journal out of Chelsea. It's in the center of the territory it covers; it's convenient to the main post office. It would be difficult to find a better location for quick access to railroads for easy hop to farmers' conventions. The magazine has around 2,000 subscribers in New York City, but doesn't encourage more.

Back of the plant, the old church yard has eight or ten trees that bravely meet each new spring with hard-won greenery, but ask the printers and the editors what they are and it turns out they don't know. They're not ashamed to admit it. They shrug it off and say: "Heck, they're only city trees. No need to figure out what *they* are."

—Meyer Berger

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Rural Life Sunday, May 26, 1957

• Rural Life Sunday will again be observed on Rogation Sunday, the fifth Sunday after Easter, May 26.

This year's order of service was prepared by the Rev. Dale W. Medearis, national director of town and country church work for the Disciples of Christ.

Copies may be obtained from your cooperating home missions board or from the Department of Town and Country Church, National Council of Churches, 257 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., at the following rates: Single copies, 5 cents each; 100 copies or more, $1.50 for each 100 copies. Carriage extra on quantity orders.

Rural Life Sunday Observance

• St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Jeffersonville, Indiana, uses the "Cross and Plow" service on Rogation Sunday, or Rural Life Sunday—sometimes in the church and sometimes out-of-doors. Last year it was held in the church. The Rev. G. W. Moore, rector of the church, describes it as follows:

"On the Gospel side in the nave, just in front of the lectern, we had a long dinner table (10′ x 4′) covered with soil and on it was displayed a miniature farm house, barn, cattle, etc.—the land was ploughed, ready for the seed.

"In the presentation of the staple seeds, a child carried some on a small plate and designated it, e.g., 'these are grape seeds from which wine for the Holy Communion service is grown.' Each child on naming the seeds planted them in the furrows.

"Of course, we had actual tools there—hoe, spade, cultivator, etc.

"The congregation was greatly impressed and saw the relative partnership of God and man."

As Farmers Pray

• Father of winter and summer, seedtime and harvest, we seek thy presence in our homes and lives. We give thee thanks for food and the joys of agriculture. We are grateful for all thy gifts: for the effects of fertilizer; for knowledge of weed control; for the invention of better tools; for research that will improve our livelihood; and for the skill of the veterinarian. We thank thee for supplying all our needs and for the faith in thee that can make us whole. In the name of Jesus, we pray. *Amen.*

—Hugh Outterson

"You can rest on your laurels in comfort only over night. Laurel leaves wilt quickly; then they become hard and prickly—a most uncomfortable resting place. If you want to rest comfortably on your laurels, you will have to win fresh ones every day."—*Good Business*

Town & Country Church

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Contributors of articles to TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH speak for themselves and not for the National Council of Churches or sponsoring organizations.

Purposes of This Journal

The purposes of this Journal are:

A. To encourage cooperation among rural churches.

B. To improve the administration of the local church, this to include organization of the church, finance, religious education, community relationships, and the training of lay leadership.

C. To stimulate the development of a Christian philosophy of rural life, this to embrace ethical issues in agriculture, social reconstruction, and government programs; and the content of the minister's message.

Part of Larger Program

The Journal is an important part of an enlarged "cooperative rural church program" that will encourage a national "rural church movement."

Where Are Our Young Adults?

ERNEST W. BARNES

• One denomination in Connecticut has just made a survey of its work with young adults. Out of some three hundred churches (the majority of them small rural parishes) thirty-nine reported active groups of young adults. Sixty-one expressed an interest in forming such groups and asked for materials and suggestions. The balance of about two-thirds of the churches did not think it worthwhile to reply. Did this mean that two-thirds of the churches were not interested in organized work with their young people between the ages of eighteen and thirty years? Certainly not. Some were doubtless so small that they could count their young people between these ages on one hand. Others assimilated those over high school age who did not go away to school in the adult activities of the church.

Sometimes a veteran church leader will say, "We hold 'em through junior high in our Sunday school, then we lose 'em until they get children of their own when they are likely to take an interest in the church again for their family's sake." This passive attitude of resignation is certainly not true of most active churches today.

Recently I visited two small churches. What a contrast they presented! The first, a small church in Minnesota, in mid-summer had a congregation of over one hundred, some thirty per cent of which was young adults. You felt the vitality of this group in the life of the church. The second, a New England church of about the same size where the entire congregation was older adults. For years this church has been unable to hold its young people. As they marry, they drop out, either going to other churches or abandoning active church participation.

The Church Needs Them

Evidently churches which a generation ago lost their young people at junior high age (because they felt that dropping out of Sunday school was a sign that they were growing up) now have classes for senior high, young adults and adults. They emphasize the belief that if you are a wise parent you will "bring" your children to church school, rather than just "send" them. While there why not drop in and take advantage of the Adult Bible group? This program is sound building for a family which wants to be integrated into the church.

Young adults have much to give to the church: their fresh points of view; their enthusiasms; their open-minded questioning (even of some time-honored and moss-covered procedures in the local church; their willingness to undertake what the older heads believe to be too much work; their example to the younger set. This last cannot be minimized. It is often the deciding factor in holding the active interest of high school youth in the church.

They Need the Church

The older leader who accepts the idea that a church must not expect strong, active membership in the group between eighteen and thirty-five years of age, has failed to see clearly what happens to men and girls during these years. Of course, they are hard to locate and to keep track of, frequently dropping out of the picture because of changes in educational plans, employment, marriage or a call to the armed services. A church adviser working with young adults can anticipate two or three times the turnover that is expected with younger or older groups.

In spite of this rapid turnover, these are years when the church should be closely related to its young adults if it is to discharge its function as a guide, a teacher, a stabilizing force, an interpreter and an inspiration.

Now why do young adults especially need the church?

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—Because these are the years when they are first "out on their own," when they have their own incomes, a new freedom and a sense of importance as individuals.

—Because they are preparing for their life work, selecting a vocation. Where else but from the church will they get their standards of value for the choosing of a life work?

—Because they are exploring deeper friendships which normally lead to the selection of a life partner. What an important decision! Can the church help by sharing a set of values upon which to base this choice?

—Because they are taking up their responsibilities as citizens, not only of their own country but increasingly of the world. Has the church anything to say about the breadth of a man's horizon and the scope of his prejudices?

—Because, in seeking solutions to the above problems, they are shaping a philosophy of life, a pattern which is likely to determine their nature at forty or sixty years of age. What has the church to offer as to the wisdom of living for oneself or for others?

—To these might be added matters of culture, recreation, personal and group service, informal education, hobbies, travel and a host of other unfolding live values.

Certainly, if the church has anything significant to offer to life, in the field of guidance, counsel, standards, codes, incentives and goals, its best customers should be sought in the age group between eighteen and thirty-five.

How to Reach Them

Unfortunately some churches have felt that the most successful way to enroll these elusive young adults is to "bait" them with socials, parties and recreation. Now young folks probably have more opportunities for recreation from all sources than any other age group. With this approach the church is merely competing with the fraternity, the sorority, the social club, the athletic club, the country club—to say nothing of recreational programs offered by the unions, schools, colleges and other organizations in which young adults are trying to find status.

The more productive approach is to recognize that while all these recreational activities may be an asset and a natural part of any church program, they are NOT the program. For the church has a quite different sphere, in which it has little competition. All sorts of agencies and organizations are bidding for the time and attention of young adults, offering "quantity" to life. The church has "quality" to offer. Other organizations may tell them "what" to do but the church is commissioned to help them ask "why" they do this or that.

A church cannot put on a dance or a picnic and measure its success merely by how many attend and "breaking even." As a true church it must ask itself: "What happened to the folks involved?" Are they finer people with better friendships? Have they greater appreciations and fewer prejudices? Have they new incentives? Or is this just another event?

When a church brings this qualitative approach to its young adults —helping them to find meaning in life, to choose a job and a life partner, to make good use of their leisure time, to set goals for personal growth and service—then the church is unique and need fear little competition.

Arkansas has Town and Country Seminar

• Sponsored by the Arkansas Council of Churches in cooperation with the Arkansas University's College of Agriculture and Home Economics, Agricultural Extension service, and the General Extension service, a Town and Country Church Seminar was held at Fayetteville, February 12-15, for pastors and laymen. Over 100 persons attended.

The opening session of the seminar featured an address by David M. Graybeal, professor at Drew Theological Seminary, on "The Community and the Church." Preceding Dr. Graybeal's speech, President John Tyler Caldwell gave an address of welcome.

Included in the sessions of the four-days' seminar were daily devotions, classes on the church and community, and panel discussions. Winthrop Rockefeller, chairman of the Arkansas Industrial Development commission, delivered a lecture on "Industrial Development in the Town and Country Community."

Town and Country Seminar at Fayetteville, Arkansas

Conferences on Cooperative Churches

MARK RICH

"I was a Baptist (not a hard hell), but I feel at home in this hurch, with the spirit of love they ave here. These words, spoken by a ay woman about a federated church Methodist, Disciple and Baptist) in very small town on the Missouri iver, typified the spirit of an all-ay conference on the federated hurch. Held in the Arrowrock Fed-rated Church, a total of about 70 ersons, of whom about fifty came rom outside the community, spent rofitable hours in consideration of he problems and advantages of the ederated church.

Sponsor of the conference was the Missouri Council of Churches hrough its committee on town and ountry. The principal speaker was Dr. Ralph L. Williamson of Dakota Vesleyan University at Mitchell, outh Dakota. Dr. Williamson traced he history of federated churches, elineated their characteristics, and ndicated methods of procedure in rganization. Members of the Arrow-ock Federated Church, interrogated y the Rev. Jack Bodard of the Bible ollege of Missouri, told the story of he Arrowrock Federated Church. The afternoon was spent in discus-ion groups, reports and final sum-nary.

The following day, in the United hurch at New Cambria, Missouri, conference was held on the larger arish. Again, the scene of the con-erence provided an exciting labora-ory for the United Church was part f the Macon County Larger Parish, n interdenominational three-church arish embracing the towns of New ambria, Ethel, and Bevier. The all-ay conference gave a wide-range iew of the larger parish.

For those attending these were nemorable days. Probably these two pecialized conferences were the first f their kind held in Missouri, al-hough Missouri has a history of sev-eral types of church ventures. The ospitality, brought to high expres-ion in delectable dinners (free), was reminiscent of days long past. In outlook and attitude, the groups were progressive and constructive. Several vivid impressions were made by these meetings.

At both conferences a majority of those in attendance were vigorously interested in cooperative forms and came seeking more information about them. There was no throwing of monkey wrenches, no cat calls, no obstructing of progress. Those present were eager participants, eager learners.

The conference gave opportunity to believers in cooperation to express their views. A layman, typical of a good many, said forcefully, "This division is a scandal in face of the Gospel of Jesus Christ." There are people in Missouri who believe in church cooperation and who will speak for it.

At both conferences, the story of a successful cooperative venture had evangelizing force. At Arrowrock, the members of the church told the story of the coming together of three tiny church groups. That was in 1950. They were realistic about the difficulties and very certain about the benefits of cooperation. Their testimony changed some doubters into believers. The New Cambria panel drawn out by the Rev. Charles Guest, rural worker for the Presbyterian Church U. S. A. in Missouri, was no less convincing. In 1948, the Congregational and Presbyterian Churches joined in a united church. The erection of a beautiful and utilitarian edifice and the launching of a vigorous program has cemented a close fellowship which recognizes no lines of denomination. The telling of the story of the Macon County Larger Parish was equally enthusiastic.

As the two conferences progressed, it became clear that the federation of churches and the cooperative relationships within a larger parish did not discourage participation of the groups with their own denominational programs. These people truly were attempting to practice the doctrine of diversity in unity and unity in diversity.

This cooperation was practiced with some difficulty. At Arrowrock the denominational officials fought the federation. One official vowed that as long as there was one member of his body in the town, he would not condone the cooperative arrangement. Another denominational group was excommunicated, in so far as that can be done within a congregation governed by association. But, at New Cambria, the story was different. Here the two state executives were praised and honored for the stand they took and the assistance they gave in getting the church together.

In both conferences one had the feeling that there is in the small churches of the state a body of opinion favorable to cooperation; that level-headed, consecrated people are willing to take down dividing walls for an arrangement that invites into fellowship people of varied backgrounds.

Institute at Bible College

• The seventh annual Rural Church Institute was held at the Bible College of Missouri, on the campus of the University of Missouri, February 5-7, 1957. One hundred fifty-one lay persons and ministers, representing fourteen denominations, attended this interdenominational short course which dealt with opportunities in the Town and Country church and community.

Among the leaders was Dr. Wesley A. Hotchkiss, Director of the Town and Country Department of the Board of Home Missions, Congregational Christian Church. Dr. Hotchkiss is one of the best-known young leaders in the field of the rural church. His farm background adds much to his knowledge of the small community. He presented three addresses: "The Earth in the Scheme of the Christian Faith," "The Social Sciences and the Church," and "The Christian Faith and the Rural Community."

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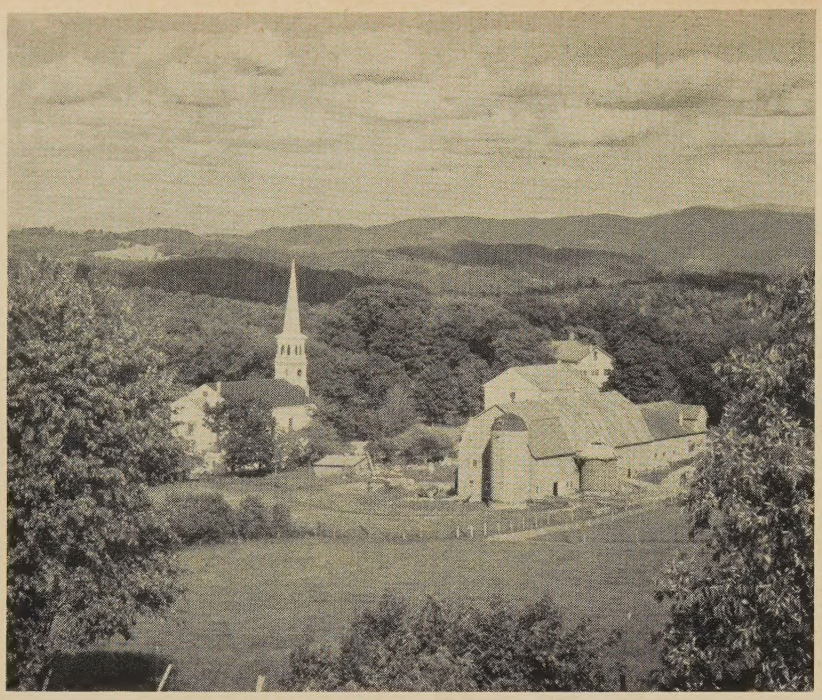


Winston Pote from A. Devaney, N. Y.

Wordsworth's Fearless Simplicity

BENSON Y. LANDIS

• Wordsworth's fearless simplicity stands in marked contrast to much modern poetry. Of certain modern poetry, as of certain modern painting, it has been observed that it is simply a private means of communication, which is understood only by poet or painter. The rest of us speculate, but usually do not understand. Not so the English poet, William Wordsworth. He revealed an obligation to be clear.

These interpretations of poets are by one who is not a technical student, but rather an amateur who appreciates a number of poets with rural and religious accents. I choose here to emphasize Wordsworth as the clear interpreter of the significance to him of the word of nature. Much of his own attitude is found in the famous "Lines," "composed a few miles above Tintern Abbey, on revisiting the banks of the Wye during a tour" in 1798.

. . . Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows and the woods,
And mountains; and of all that we behold
From this green earth; of all the mighty world
Of eye and ear—both what they half create,
And what perceive; well pleased to recognize
In nature and the language of the sense,
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart and soul
Of all my moral being.

In another poem, "The Tables Turned," occur the words, "Let nature be your teacher."

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good
Than all the sages can.

"Wordsworth holds a singular place in literature," declared William Hale White, the English writer who wrote under the name of Mark Rutherford. "He preaches no sermon; he teaches no definite lesson, and yet a man who devoted himself to Wordsworth and is religious and a lover of beauty will find himself looking at the world in a certain way; it will no longer be what it was without Wordsworth; hills, clouds, sea, and human beings will not be the same. Of no other writer can this be said, at least not so distinctly. . . ." When Mr. White read Wordsworth's *Lyrical Ballads,* he said the discovery was like the experience of Paul on the road to Damascus.

More recently, Geoffrey Hartman in his book, *The Unmediated Vision* (Yale University Press) wrote of Wordsworth and three others. He devotes one essay to the opening paragraph of "Tintern Abbey," noting Wordsworth's creative imagination, and his connecting it with a sort of transcendent generosity, so that the poems become a revelation.

In the poem, "Influence of Natural Objects," Wordsworth refers in the sub-title to the way they have called forth and strengthened the imagination in boyhood and early youth. In "Tintern Abbey" Wordsworth said that he had learned to look on nature "hearing oftentimes the still, sad music of humanity . . . of ample power to chasten and subdue." And he had felt "a sense sublime of something far more deeply interfused . . . that impels all objects of all thought, and rolls through all things."

In our time, with its preoccupation with gadgets and other things, Wordsworth's famous lines which were written in 1806 are often quoted:

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:
Little we see in Nature that is ours:
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon.

On a beach near Calais in the autumn of 1802, Wordsworth wrote "It is a Beauteous Evening, Calm and Free":

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,
The holy time is quiet as a nun
Breathless with adoration; the broad sun
Is sinking down in its tranquility;
The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the sea . . .

While resting on a bridge in March, a poem "Written in March" celebrated the scene. A part reads:

The green field sleeps in the sun;
The oldest and youngest

Are at work with the strongest;
The cattle are grazing,
Their heads never raising;
There are forty feeding like one!

Wordsworth wrote a poem at Town-end, Grasmere, "To a Small Celandine":

Pansies, lilies, kingcups, daisies,
Let them live upon their praises;
Long as there's a sun that sets,
Primroses will have their glory;
Long as there are violets,
They will have a place in story:
There's a flower that shall be mine,
'Tis the little Celandine. . . .

Another, "To the Same Flower," contained among others the following lines:

Drawn by what peculiar spell,
By what charm of sight or smell,
Does the dim-eyed curious Bee,
Laboring for their waxen cells,
Fondly settle upon Thee?
Prized above all buds and bells
Opening daily at thy side,
By the season multiplied?

In "Lines Written in Early Spring," the poet recorded that he had heard a "thousand blended notes" in one grove, and went on to reflect that "to her fair works did Nature link the human soul that through" him ran. He closed, however, in a pensive mood concerning man in relation to man:

If this belief from heaven be sent,
If such be Nature's holy plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What man has made of man?

National Family Week

• May 5-12 will be observed as National Family Week. At that time the nation, community by community, church and civic group, will gain focus earnest attention on the American family.

National Family Week has grown steadily since the initial observance more than a dozen years ago. Sponsored by the churches (Protestant, Catholic, Jewish) to emphasize the importance of homes in the nation's life and to have family welfare a community effort, perhaps its greatest gain in the period has been in the churches' working in shared responsibility with unrelated community groups.

Federal Credit Union System

• A systematic study of "policy and practice" of the federal credit union system has been written by John T. Croteau, a professor of economics at the University of Notre Dame (*The Federal Credit Union,* New York, Harper & Brothers, 1956. $4.00). Dr. Croteau was familiar with credit unions in Canada before teaching in U.S.A.

The book is a readable history of the first twenty years of experience under the Federal Credit Union Act of 1934. Dr. Croteau calls the credit union "a novel institution of personal finance." It is also an enterprise which demonstrates the way the federal government has encouraged voluntary action.

"The growth of the system points to an institutional arrangement that has sought to combine the prestige and the solidity of a federal statute and the general supervision and examination of a federal bureau with the personal altruism and benevolence of the community group."

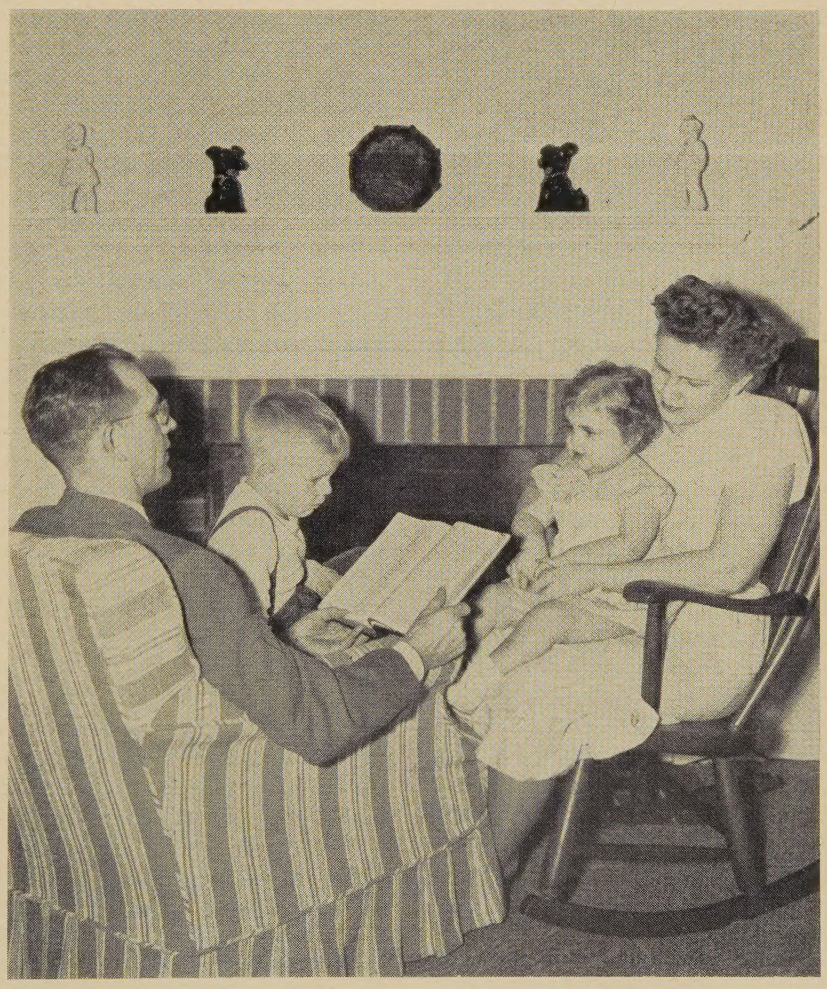
Twenty years after organization, the federal credit union system reported some 7,250 local organizations, with 3,500,000 members and assets of $1,000,000,000, surely evidence that broad mutual aid and private enterprise could be fostered by a government bureau.

The number of state-chartered mutual or cooperative thrift associations was still larger.

—Benson Y. Landis

The Next Issue

• The next issue of Town and Country Church will be dated September 1957. We do not publish during June, July or August.



Luoma Photo

Talking the Farmers' Language

R. C. PLANT

• How many Baptist pastors talk the farmer's language? Dr. Norman High, Ontario Agricultural College, said: "Too many have the idea that you can just go and talk or tell a few stories or use slang expressions and you are successful." Then he added, "I am in complete disagreement with that approach to farm people."

Dr. High, one of Canada's rural-life spokesmen, made this statement in a personal letter to the Rev. Ross Readhead, pastor of one of Ontario's successful rural charges. Mr. Readhead, while obtaining a degree of Bachelor of Divinity from McMaster University, wrote a thesis entitled "Leadership Training in the Rural Church." Dr. High had asked to read it, and expressed approval, saying that more country agents should have this understanding of the rural people.

Although the Rev. Ross Edmund Readhead, B.A., B.D., pastor of one of the most progressive rural charges of Lambton County, Alvinston, Brooke, and Brooke-Enniskillen, has said that "rural work is mostly effort rather than accomplishment," visitors to the field can see much accomplished.

Dr. N. H. Parker, McMaster's Dean of Theology, visited Alvinston recently. He said that on the field was an "impressive group of young people," making a name for themselves in Middlesex-Lambton Association. These Alvinston-Brooke young people have won the attendance shield twice and the cup for the Music Festival once in recent competition.

Junior Choirs

At Brooke-Enniskillen, two choirs are in operation, under the direction of Mrs. Kathryn Bridges, ATCM, called by her pastor a "most zealous church worker." The Junior Choir includes eighteen voices, and sings at the evening service on alternate Sundays. Both choirs practice every week. Some of the young girls also attend a thriving Explorer group.

The field has become noted in the area for special services to which the whole community is often invited. Every Christmas eve a deeply devotional worship period is offered to the people, and for the past three Easters, Sunrise Services have been held at Alvinston at 6:30 a.m., on the banks of the Sydenham River. Last year over two hundred people lined the river to stand throughout the worship service.

On Rural Life Sunday, in May, Brooke-Enniskillen farmers participated in a dedication service for the seed to be sown in the soil, and a consecration of the sower. Members of the congregation came forward pouring out a libation of various seeds, the seed being named audibly as it cascaded forth: "This is corn, this is barley . . . wheat . . . rye," and as a symbol of the width of the Kingdom enterprise, and its interest in missions, rice was included.

Lenten Retreats

The Lenten season has been marked in the area by spiritual retreats. One afternoon the whole field was invited to "Be and Eee," when a worship service using recorded music as well as congregational singing was conducted. Following a devotional period, the large group broke up into small discussion circles, in which the emphasis was placed on expressing the worship in service.

Another popular retreat is held by the married couples' group, when the young parents and their small children, those not attending school, go to one of the homes for noon dinner. After dishes, the adults gather for an afternoon of informal Bible study and prayer, breaking up at 4:30 in time to meet the school children coming home.

This thriving rural field is under the leadership of a man to whom farm life is no novelty. Born in 1923 on a farm near Woodstock, Ont., Mr. Readhead was soon helping his father, Irvine Bailey Readhead, farm 200 acres of dairy land. Each day started at four a.m. with about thirty head of cows to milk before school. During the pre-school-bus days, Ross rode a ten-dollar bicycle five miles to and from school each day.

Mr. Readhead's grandfather, a shepherd in England who came to Canada, bought the Woodstock homestead, and because of his illness, Irvine Readhead took over as a young man, and now is retired from farming.

Dawn to Dusk

When his son Ross was graduated from Woodstock High School, there was no farm help available, during these war years, so for four years Ross continued to work from dawn to dusk with his father. Finally being able to enter McMaster University, he studied from 1945 to 1951, obtaining two degrees.

Mr. Readhead's first pastorate was Springford, the birthplace of his father. Starting as a student pastor, he served that charge from 1950 to 1953. During his tenure, the annual budget of the church rose from $2,500 to $7,000, with a credit balance in the bank of $1,100 when he left.

But, of more importance, for some years prior to his going to Springford, the church had witnessed only one baptismal service. During his service there, he had occasion to conduct three baptisms, with several candidates professing faith in Jesus Christ each time. There was a steady increase in attendance over that period, with the work of the young people being notably successful. Although never having attended a BYPU Convention before, twelve of his young people went to the Chatham convention, returning with new enthusiasm for the work.

As a result, the Associational Rally was held in Springford when approximately one hundred young people were entertained for the day. To ensure the success of the venture, Mr. and Mrs. Readhead, with no assistance, set up the tables for the pot-luck supper, cleaned up the church afterwards, and completely organized the local hospitality themselves.

During their Springford ministry, the first Vacation Church School known to the community was directed by Mr. Readhead.

Sunday Program

Since a delegation of men from Alvinston attracted Mr. Readhead to the three-point field he now holds, he has conducted a Sunday program known only to rural pastors.

He starts his Sunday at nine-forty-five, teaching a married couples' class at Brooke-Enniskillen, a class he organized. At eleven he conducts the morning service in the same church, which is usually filled. At two-thirty he goes to Brooke and teaches the young peoples' Bible class. At the moment he is conducting a series of lessons on boy-girl relationships in the light of Christian principles, with the thirteen high-school age people that attend regularly. That Sunday school session is followed by the three-thirty church service at Brooke.

The evening brings two more church services, seven-thirty at Alvinston, and eight-thirty at "Be and See." He drives the eight miles between the churches while the song director at the latter church is opening the service.

With the three churches requiring constant pastoral oversight, Mr. Readhead has discovered the wisdom of carrying a pair of overalls in his car trunk. When the farmer he calls on is plowing, he often dons the overalls, climbs on the tractor, and has his talk as they plow. On one occasion the farmer was in his yard unsuccessfully attempting to rope a steer, an active moment not very useful for a pastoral call. Not wishing to go on without speaking to the church member, Mr. Readhead put on his overalls, helped corner the steer and hold it while the farmer roped it, and then they both sat down on a bale of hay for the pastoral visit. Someone telling the story afterwards credited the minister with holding down the steer after a flying-tackle like Roy Rogers, but Mr. Readhead smiled and said, "I couldn't hold a steer down if I tried. Actually we held the beast in the corner, I twisted its tail, while we snuggled the halter over his head."

Rural Challenge

The opening sentence in Mr. Readhead's thesis says: "The opportunities presented to the Christian Church in the rural areas of Ontario challenge our denomination." As a successful rural pastor, Mr. Readhead feels, some years after writing that sentence, that these opportunities have to be cornered and roped by our denomination, or our country communities will be lost to the pagan forces now at work in the rural life. "But the rural life is the future of Canada," he insists.

Sometimes these opportunities take the shape of fork-handles, when Mr. Readhead visits farmers who are threshing beans. With a pile of beans to be forked, and the farmer's hands seeing the preacher working them like the experienced man he is, opportunities for witness are presented that would not otherwise be found.

As a member of the Rural Church Commission, and as a constant student of the task who attends OAC's annual clergy's training seminar, Mr. Readhead is regarded by many as one of today's most understanding rural pastors. He believes God rewards the farmer who learns the laws of soil productivity, who develops better skills in soil analysis, fertilization, cultivation, reaping, and marketing. He believes that the farmer and God are partners, and as a Christian pastor he believes himself called to speak for God.

—Reprinted, with permission, from *The Canadian Baptist*

The Sparsely Populated Areas

• A second interdenominational conference on Churching the Sparsely Populated Areas will be held at Billings, Montana, November 12-14, 1957. This will be a follow-up conference of the one that was held in Bismarck, North Dakota in 1955. It is hoped that national denominational executives of town and country church work, members of state and area boards and town and country committees, and missionaries who are doing significant work in this area will all attend.

Bible College

(*Continued from Page 7*)

Other leaders included the Rev. Don J. W. Burkhalter, Missouri Council of Churches; the Rev. Jack P. Bodard, Director of Town and Country, Missouri Christian Missionary Society; Dr. Charles T. Guest, Director of Town and Country Work of the Missouri Synod Headquarters, Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.; and many others. The worship services were led by the Rev. H. Ellis Plyler, Rural Coordinator for the National Council of Churches in Puerto Rico.

Group discussions included such subjects as Basic Needs of Young People, Facing the Rural Economy and Its Effects upon the Serving Church, Techniques of Presenting a Program of Mission Education for the Local Church, Characteristics of an Effective Mid-Twentieth Century Church in the Smaller Places, When the People Plan the Church Program, How to Receive the Services for Your Community from the University of Missouri, A Seven-Day Program in the Church, and Evaluating the Adequacy of Your Church Program.

This Institute was sponsored by The Rural Seminary of the Bible College of Missouri and the University of Missouri College of Agriculture in cooperation with the Sears Roebuck Foundation; the Missouri Christian Missionary Society; the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., Missouri Synod; and The Methodist Church.

Harvest Festival

• The Department of Town and Country Church of the National Council of Churches will again have available by August 15th its annual Order of Service for a Harvest Festival. It will be so arranged that it will be suitable for use by a congregation. This year's Order of Service will be prepared for the Department by Dr. Mark Dawber, former executive secretary of the Home Missions Council of North America, now pastor of the People's Church at Long Beach, New York.

The Country Community in Denmark

HAROLD W. FOGHT

• A group of American teachers found themselves, several years ago, whirled along in gay jaunting carts over the beautiful shore drive leading Northward from Copenhagen. On either side grew the dark green beech trees for which Denmark is famous. Here and there they got a glimpse of lake and field, a gray stone spire of some century old country church, and cattle knee-deep in fragrant grass. The pulsating throb of steam exhaust came to them from the cooperative creamery, or slaughter-house on the sky-line. Everything betokened a land of plenty, of human contentment; land where the very soil is sacred. Right by enchanted Elsinore, where Hamlet beheld his father's ghost, the journey went, and all too soon the delightful experience came to an end; for right ahead of our travelers lay the goal—a typical Danish country community.

Here, at the side of the ample highway, lay clustered the institutions which are essential to any community life—the house, the school, the church. But the travelers' pleasure and delight lay not so much in the mere fact that here were homes and a school and a country church, as in the fact that the influences emanating from them had been sufficient to hold together a progressive, God-fearing country life so complete in itself that the unrest which at the present time marks farm life in the United States and other countries had little or no effect upon it.

First of mention is the schoolmaster's home—a rambling place, spick and span without and within. Flower beds, graveled walks, and rustic seats filled the front yard. To the rear lay the experimental plots and vegetable garden, in which the master and children were wont to work side by side while the earth preached her sermons for their ears and made them strong in their love to dwell close to nature's heart. Then there was the schoolhouse. Here, also, the love of nature was apparent. But of chief interest is the subject-matter taught in this school: The mother tongue; a beautiful literature and a long and noble history; and religious subjects, which form a required part of the curriculum. But the farm subjects, after all, form the core of the school work. Here are taught the first steps in all those things which have made the Danes the most scientific farmers in the world. It is in school that the children early become intimate with the Creator, learning to know Him through the study of leaf and blade and flower. This means a love of nature for its own sake rather than for the money to be gotten out of it. The farm is home. These people prefer the country life to life in the city.

Nothing could be more appropriate than that the fine old manse and old stone church should lie close by the school; for these two institutions are inseparable. Just as the schoolmaster dwells in the midst of his people, honored and revered by all, so does the pastor live his life in the midst of his flock, ministering unto them—baptizing them, marrying them, and finally burying them in the graveyard out beyond the church. There can be no question of dying country churches in a community where such a pastor labors. He is a scholarly man; he has studied the needs of his people, and has rightfully taken his place as spiritual leader and advisor.

High Country Ideals

In Denmark there is no danger of a cityward exodus. More than sixty-five per cent of its people dwell in the open country. The Danish farmers have solved the problems which we are facing today. Their agriculture is scientific; their social ideals are remarkably high; their economic organizations of a cooperative nature are unexcelled anywhere.

It is neither desirable nor wise to transplant to our shores social systems taken from European countries; yet such countries can often teach us lessons of greater value. Denmark had her problems. What had been lost in lands and people and national wealth has been more than regained; the spirit of nationalism is strong in the people; and, best of all, Danish country folk and city folk have learned to cooperate in matters of mutual concern.

Facing Our Own Problems

Our country life is undergoing a transition. There is a shifting, changing, and one might almost say disintegration going on in country population, manifesting itself in the crumbling, or at least weakening, of church and school and allied institutions out in the open country. This situation must be met fairly and frankly by the good men and women of America. A proper solution of the difficulties now confronting American country life must ultimately be of vital importance to city life and national life as a whole. Under such circumstances, we may well consider what other nations are doing to make their country life satisfactory and wholesome.

—From a statement first published by The American Baptist Home Mission Society in 1912.

Seedtime and Harvest

O Thou, Who givest all their food,
Causing Thy sun to shine
Upon the evil and the good,
Earth's teeming stores are Thine.

Thy covenant to man secures
The harvest of his toil;
Thy faithful word, while earth endures,
With plenty clothes the soil.

The wintry frost, the flowery prime,
Alike Thy laws obey;
Each herb and blossom knows its time,
And feels the quickening ray.

Revolving seasons still proclaim
Thy all-sustaining word;
Seed-time and harvest speak Thy Name,
The promise-keeping Lord.

—Josiah Conder, 1789-1855
Hymn No. 863, *Hymnal and Liturgies of the Moravian Church (Unitas Fratrum)*

Happiness depends not so much upon position as it does on disposition.

Fuersteneck Folk High School

Fuersteneck is one of thirty-six ocal folk high schools in Germany. ach has its own charactertistics, but ll are organized for the purpose of iving to young people between ighteen and thirty years of age aining in genuine intellectual en- eavors and in happy relationships or life within the family, in the ommunity, and in the state.

he Work

Experience has resulted in making tudy courses, lasting several months, he basis of the work of German and uropean folk high schools. During he summer months Fuersteneck of- ers extension courses for city youth, nd during the winter months for ural youth.

At present, much attention is given n technical and trade schools to the rofessional and economic develop- nent of an individual. In view of his, it becomes more and more ap- arent that our underlying prin- iples of family and community life eteriorate when the individual is rained exclusively for his own eco- omic interests and when his re- ponsibilities toward society as a hole are not kept alive. For this eason, it is the purpose of the ourses at Fuersteneck to awaken and nfold the responsibilities which hristians hold to the family, to rofessional relations, the state, and eyond our boundaries.

It is gratifying to know that a umber of young foreigners attend he main courses of Fuersteneck. This results in fruitful exchanges of houghts and experiences and also n many friendships for life beyond he boundaries of the nation. Every ear some of our former students ravel to neighboring countries, ither to visit old friends, or to join professional seminar.

It is gratifying, also, that both hristian confessions cooperate in he work of the Fuersteneck. We ecognize our task of developing a ype of youth which is prepared for responsible cooperative effort in neeting the common problems of oday. Many young people who be- cause of family relations or individual fate no longer had a real connection with our Christian heritage, find again their way because of the Christian attitude exemplified in Fuersteneck and the examples of their classmates.

Courses

The summer semester offers courses for the training of youth and the education of adults in keeping with their respective problems: for teachers of the educational systems; for pastors of both confessions; for students and other interested groups. In addition, singing and choral work are offered.

Special attention is given to problems of the German interior areas and the development of the central German zones. Beyond that, there is the possibility for interested organizations to offer, at corresponding rates, their own courses and work sessions at Fuersteneck.

Announcements regarding the different courses are separately published and may be had on request.

Who are Invited

Our doors are open to all responsible and wide-awake persons, and also to those who have not yet discovered the meaning of life and the nature of the present era. The nature of the educational preparation does not matter. We are interested in the person and his experiences.

Who Sponsors Fuersteneck

It is sponsored by the Hessian Local Folk High School, Inc., through which the following organizations plan and work together: the Hessian youth circle, the state union for adult education, the ministry of education and culture, the evangelical state churches of Kurhessia-Waldeck and of Hessian and Nassau, the Catholic church, the labor circle for home and youth music, and other city and rural organizations. The union has acquired a long-term lease from the province of Hessian for Fuersteneck, an estate of 30 acres and has developed it for this purpose. Here, the rural terrain is of unusual beauty. There is a splendid view of the Knuell, Seling forest, the foothills of the Thueringian forest and the Rhoen river. In the foreground are the Hessian hills.

Within this rural expanse the buildings form a closed campus which is favorable for intellectual concentration. Here are found the school building with class rooms, library, living rooms, and bedrooms for the sessions; the utility building with kitchen and dining room, guest rooms and work rooms; the dwelling house with office, living apartments, guest rooms and music room. There is on the North side an old tower from the Staufer period, and on the South side an entertainment hall. To the North, three old linden trees border the play ground and dance place in front of the terrace; at the South, in front of the gate, is an ancient linden tree, the special symbol of the place.

—Excerpts from a translation from the German by Dr. William R. Frerichs, Dean-emeritus, Linfield College, McMinnville, Oregon

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Craftsmen in Action

• There had always been hand craftsmen in Vermont, that is, since the white settlers arrived, and even before if we count the hand work of the Indians, but prior to 1938 there had never been an active state-wide organization composed of hand craftsmen. There was a need for one, of course. Some craftsmen easily found markets while others failed through lack of information, correct pricing and know-how. Some succeeded in making a saleable product without help, while others never seemed able to give their things the right consumer acceptance touch.

So, in 1938, a group of people met at Fletcher Farm in Ludlow, Vermont and formed the Arts and Crafts Association of Vermont. For several years business meetings, exhibits and fairs were held, at irregular intervals, where interest seemed to be strongest. But as time went on it be-

(*Continued on Page* 16)

Rural Sociology and Rural Development Programs*

HAROLD F. KAUFMAN and WILFRED C. BAILEY

• In a broad sense any activity which advances the way of life of rural people might be termed rural development. For research as well as for planning, a much sharper focus is necessary, however. Three distinguishing characteristics of rural development programs as the term is used in this paper are made explicit. One is that they focus on rural populations that have a level of living below given standards. Two, these programs are planned and made explicit to realize economic objectives and other goals. A third characteristic is that the programs have multiple interests, e.g., economic, health, educational, etc.

A half-century of experience in rural development exists. Highlights during this period include the formation of President Theodore Roosevelt's Rural Life Commission in 1908, the establishment of the Agricultural Extension Service in 1914, the growth of the community club and community council movement in the twenties, the organization of a number of federal agricultural agencies in the thirties, the formation of land use planning committees and coordinating councils in the late thirties, and neighborhood activities emphasized during the war years.

In the last decade, however, concern has grown for coordination of the efforts of the agencies concerned and for the realization of multiple interests. This is seen in both domestic and foreign programs.

Interdisciplinary Research

Although the purpose of this paper is to indicate some sociological contributions to rural development, interests should be mentioned of other social sciences, notably economics, government, anthropology and geography. For example, economic interests are expressed in research in area development, and in underemployment and low productivity in agriculture; government in the administration of adjustment and improvement programs; anthropology in the cultural context of, and barriers to change; and geography in the resource base and regional implications.

Related to the interdisciplinary nature of research in rural development is the necessity of maintaining a close relationship between research and practice.

Classification

The literature of rural social and economic research is replete with references to segments of the population on the land which have a level of living and economic activity below given standards. This population is variously called the disadvantaged class, low-income farmers, underemployed rural population, small farmers, low production farms, etc.

The value of a classification is to be found in its usefulness for the job at hand. In rural development the objective is to facilitate the adjustment of given families. Thus the most useful classification would be the one which would provide the most help in the adjustment process.

From the standpoint of their present status four strategic populations or "target" groups may be designated. These are the low-income, low production, full-time operator, farm family, the part-time farm operator family, the rural resident family, and the farm labor family. In terms of adjustments needed, the first group may be subdivided into those whose farming operations can be improved so that they can make an adequate income on the land, and those who must find their major source of income elsewhere.

Public Policy

Any major program for changing or maintaining the way of life of a large segment of the population certainly has a public policy aspect. Policy analysis is concerned with long-run objectives and more ultimate values as well as short-run goals. The function of rural sociologists is frequently that of making explicit values other than the economic. Pertinent here is the question whether raising the income of a given population is the only goal, or should there be a whole complex of non-economic objectives formulated along with income as the ends of a development program?

A policy statement, the *Report of the Theodore Roosevelt Commission on Country Life,* is frequently referred to as a part of the earliest literature in rural sociology. Rural sociologists are prone to point up values of the primary group, values of nature, and of conditions making for the proper functioning of society. Although work on American farm policy is chiefly that of economists, such a treatment as Carl Taylor's *The Farmer's Movement, 1620-1920* is a definite contribution made by a sociologist. Other works of a policy nature which have definite implications for rural development are studies of regional planning and research dealing with the public and private ownership and management of land.

Rural sociology has a contribution to make in developing a philosophy of rural living. Pertinent is a critical examination of the values of the small community and of the pattern of decentralization, and comparing these with contrasting patterns of settlement. The South perhaps more than any other section of the country offers opportunity for research on the above topics both because industry is somewhat dispersed and because of public programs facilitating decentralization. Perhaps the most important research of sociologists on public policy will be the result of cooperation with other fields such as political science and agricultural economics. Work with the latter on the social impact of agricultural pricing policy might be rewarding.

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* From "Sociology and Rural Life Series No. 7," published by the Mississippi State College Agricultural Experiment Station.

lobility

Social and spatial mobility is of ntral concern in rural develop- ent. The focus is on populations hich have less than average of the dvantages thought by society to be e good things in life. The objective to provide opportunity for persons rise in social and economic rank. ural development may be con- ived of as the promotion and co- rdination of programs which will cilitate the social mobility of rural eople. For example, some farm fam- ies need assistance in climbing the gricultural ladder; others will need elp in climbing out of agriculture. or the latter it may be not only a ange in occupation but also move- ent in space.

Extensive information is needed, ot yet provided by research, on fac- rs and processes in the vertical cial movement of rural people. wo types of data are (1) attitudes, nowledge and skills of individuals nd (2) institutional and community ctors which act as channels for or arriers to mobility. Some of the elevant attitude complexes are oc- upational orientation, level of as- iration, and community involve- ent and identity.

Several agencies exist to facilitate cial mobility. The agricultural gencies focus on those who would ecome more prosperous, commer- ial farmers. The farm and home de- elopment program sponsored by e Agricultural Extension Service as this objective, namely, creating ore prosperous, commercial farm milies. Educational agencies, which rovide training and guidance for onagricultural jobs, and employ- ent services are especially relevant r those who in order to rise in nk must go off the farm. Of sig- ificance here also are industrial de- elopment programs. Welfare and metimes health agencies have a ecial contribution to make to a ird group of families—those handi- apped through age, illness, or ab- ence of a major breadwinner.

The migration of persons from the nd is one of the major population ovements today. What effect does is movement have on the social rganization and economic level of e areas from which the migrants come? What are the selective processes at work in determining who moves? What are the problems of adjustment of rural migrants to urban life? One of the tasks of rural development might be the training of those who must move so that migration will result in upward social mobility rather than perpetuation of disadvantaged economic position in the new setting.

Communications

In recent years rather extensive research has grown up around communication sources, process, content, and audience. Agricultural communications is one of the specialized fields in this broader area, and is one of the most rapidly developing fields in which rural sociologists have interest.

One of the most significant problem areas in rural development both from the standpoint of research and education is that of effective communication between agencies and the populations concerned. Rural persons of lower socio-economic rank have been observed to have few if any organized contacts other than religious ones. Contacts through mass media are more numerous. Meetings and other organized activities are important educational media for persons of higher rank. Whether group effort can be equally as effective with persons of lower socio-economic position is an unanswered question.

Another group of problems closely related to those of educational media and techniques of presentation are those dealing with subject matter content or messages for the type of rural families described above. These would deal with (1) vocational guidance and job opportunities, (2) homemaking activities, (3) farm planning and practices, and (4) pertinent health and welfare information.

A second area of communications research, although not developed as much as agricultural communications, is equally as important. It focuses on the communications process in decision-making.

Community Organization

A mention of group decision-making leads into the final research area pointed up in this paper, that of community organization. Community organization has from the early beginnings of rural sociology been one of its major areas of concern. Major concerns of community organization in both research and practice are coordination of local activities, leadership development, gaining participation, and program planning. Thus much that is found in organization and program planning for rural development has long been the focus of students of community organization. In fact, where emphasis is on organization in the small locality, the terms rural development and rural community organization might be used synonymously.

Perhaps the central contribution of community organization to rural development is its focus on overall planning and coordination of agencies and activities.

It may be that rural development as envisioned in the last couple of years merely adds new emphases to a movement which has already attained considerable stature. Chief among the new emphases are (1) the focus on the adjustment of rural populations which have an income level considerably below the average, and (2) careful consideration to the coordination of activities in carrying out needed adjustments at the local level and between local, state, and national agencies. The time has come for an appraisal and pointing up of research contributions to this significant movement. To aid in this task has been the purpose of this paper.

Grace Before Planting

JAMES DUFF

God, in this bitter hour
When skies are dark with doom
By thy almighty power
Bring thou this seed to flower:
Bless leaf and bud and bloom.

Thou, Grain and Growth and Grower,
Thou, Godhead, Three in One,
Bless seed and sod and sower,
Bless scythe and sheaf and mower,
Bless worker and work done.

—From *Drink From the Rock*, The Catholic Poetry Society. Published with permission.

BOOK REVIEW

The Persian Yankee. By M. Sargis Benjamin, D.D. Vantage Press, New York. 1956. $2.75.

Dr. Benjamin has presented in an easy style the main facts of his experiences—starting as a Persian village boy, through his trip to the United States and quick Americanization, and a rewarding ministry of more than forty years in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

Dr. Benjamin's ministry began in a rural church in Wisconsin. Then there were two other town and country churches in Wisconsin and Indiana before a long pastorate at the Bethany Presbyterian Church in Milwaukee. The interest of this story to town and country people is not diminished by the service in a city parish. In fact, it should be particularly inspiring to those young people in rural areas who see obstacles to their career hopes. Dr. Benjamin's life is a demonstration of what a man of faith and determination can do in progressing from a meager beginning in another less advanced culture. His summary of the outstanding moral principles which have governed his life and his descriptions of friends who have meant much along the way contribute to the picture of his own character.

Dr. Benjamin's narrative is not just inspiring, it is entertaining, especially in his description of his struggles to learn one of the most complicated and contradictory languages of the world. One cannot help but laugh aloud over the varying meanings of such simple words as "fast," "up," and "down." No wonder that he has been a popular speaker! "Pleasant Sunday-night services" in the Indiana town church began as a series of lectures on his early life, and continued in their appeal to non-church people who later found themselves members.

Americans have indeed been blessed through the thwarted hopes of this Persian who was unable to return to minister to his own people, and instead became one with those to whom he was able to minister.

—Margaret Tammen

Craftsmen

(*Continued from Page* 13)

came increasingly clear that the craftsmen of Vermont were entitled to a better working program. They needed a state department, an office with authority to act, under sponsorship of the State, for the benefit of the craftsmen as a group: a place to go for assistance in finding a market for their crafts, instruction, and occasionally but not primarily for advice about proper standards and for suggestions on correct prices.

So the Arts and Crafts Association of Vermont put its shoulder to the wheel and persuaded a sympathetic legislature that such a program was necessary. A bill was drawn. It passed both houses and was signed by the Governor. The Arts and Crafts Service, under the Department of Education, came into being. This was in June, 1941.

At the moment it has two primary activities. The first is to help its members dispose of their handmade goods at a fair price and for a reasonable profit through the promotion of fairs and Craft Markets.

The second activity is the sponsorship of a Craft School. In 1947 there came to the Society from the Board of Trustees of Fletcher Farm, Inc. at Ludlow an offer of the use of the buildings, equipment and facilities of the Fletcher Farm property, rent free, if we would establish and operate a Craft School. The property consists of a main dwelling, a second dwelling, a large barn and numerous other buildings. These buildings had all been altered to make them usable for the purposes of a school. The offer was accepted and the first session of the Fletcher Farm Craft School was held in the summer of 1948 with classes in pottery, weaving, decorative design, painting and stencilling. Since then the project has grown and Fletcher Farm Craft School has gained a good reputation. Situated at the edge of sunny fields with the hills behind them the "Farm" is an ideal spot for a vacation and for the study and pursuit of handcrafts. Courses currently offered are Early American Decoration, Hand-weaving, Reverse Painting on Glass, Gilding, Rug Hooking, Enameling, Pottery, Jewelry, Block Printing and Screen Printing with outstanding teachers in each subject.

Additional information may be procured by writing to Society of Vermont Craftsmen, Mrs. Leona M. Phelps, Bristol, Vermont.

The 1957 Convocation

• The fourteenth National Convocation on the Church in Town and Country will be held this year at the American Baptist Assembly grounds, Green Lake, Wisconsin, October 22-24.

The Convocation is held annually under the auspices of the Department of Town and Country Church of the Division of Home Missions, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.

The conference brings together those most interested in the rural church for exchange of ideas on new techniques. They worship together, inspire and educate one another, and make plans and recommendations as they confront the rural community.

Ministers of town and country churches, church administrators, officers of rural community agencies, and all others who are interested in the town and country church are cordially invited to attend this year's Convocation.

The 1957 Convocation program will differ from those of other years and free time will be provided Tuesday afternoon, from 1:00 to 3:45, for denominational "get-togethers" or for recreation. It is recommended, however, that the main denominational sessions be held after the close of the Convocation—Thursday afternoon and evening, October 24.

The program of the 1957 Convocation and detailed information regarding registration and housing will be published in the September issue of Town and Country Church.